



U.S. EMBASSY PRAGUE

AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES NEWSLETTER

Trziste 15, 118 01 Prague 1

July/August 2013

Traveling With Children

Parental consent for a child traveling with one parent or someone who is not a parent or legal guardian

If a child (under age 18) is traveling with only one parent or someone who is not the child's parent or legal guardian, what paperwork should the adult have to indicate permission or legal authority to have that minor in their care?

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) strongly recommends that in these situations the traveling adult has a letter of consent from the absent parent or legal guardian.

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Greetings from ACS

I hope you are all enjoying the beautiful summer here in the Czech Republic, and I am holding my thumbs that it doesn't end too soon!

We always like to hear from you, too. If you have suggestions for items you would like us to include in future editions of this newsletter, please let us know.

Best regards,

Charles Jess
Consul General

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Recent Travel Alerts and Warnings

Travel Alerts (Short-Term) that pose a risk to U.S. citizens abroad:

- ♦ Mali (7/10/2013)
- ♦ Cameroon (5/31/2013)
- ♦ Hurricane Season (5/30/2013)
- ♦ Iran (5/29/2013)
- ♦ Egypt (5/15/2013)

Travel Warnings (Long-Term) that pose a risk to U.S. citizens abroad:

- ♦ Yemen (7/16/2013)
- ♦ Niger (7/15/2013)
- ♦ Mexico (7/13/2013)
- ♦ Philippines (7/5/2013)
- ♦ Kenya (7/5/2013)



Credit/Debit Card "Skimming": Exercise caution when utilizing credit or debit cards in ATM machines or dubious locales. "Skimming" is the theft of credit card information by an employee of a legitimate merchant or bank, manually copying down numbers or using a magnetic stripe reader, or using a camera and skimmer installed in an ATM machine. Make sure you use an ATM with a flashing light on the card reader so that you know it is connected to the machine. Try to use ATM's located at bank branches, and avoid stand-alone ATMs at bars or clubs.

If you're a victim of this type of scam, contact your credit card company immediately.



Travel Tips

Sign your passport, and fill in the emergency information: Make sure you have a signed, valid passport, and a visa, if required, and fill in the emergency information page of your passport. Most passports are valid for ten years. Write the contact information in pencil so you can change it as needed over time.

Leave copies of itinerary, passport data page, and credit card: What happens if there's an emergency back home? Leave copies of your itinerary, passport data page and visas with family or friends so you can be contacted in case of an emergency. Leave a copy of your credit card too; in an emergency, the credit card company can help your family locate you.

Familiarize yourself with local conditions and laws: We've all had friends or family get confused by the tram in Prague; sometimes ending in an unnecessary fine. The State Department's web site at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html has useful safety, transportation and other information about the countries you will visit.

Have any questions/tips for us? Email us! We'll include them in our next newsletter:

Embassy Holiday Closures

During the months of September and October, U.S. Embassy Prague will be closed on the following days in recognition of Czech and U.S. holidays:

Monday, September 2, 2013 - Labor Day (U.S. Holiday)

Monday, October 14, 2013 - Columbus Day (U.S. Holiday)

Monday, October 28, 2013 - Czechoslovak National Day (Czech Holiday)

LGBT Visa Update

“To fully implement the requirements and implications of the Court’s decision, we will work with the Department of Justice and other agencies to review all relevant federal statutes as well as the benefits administered by this agency.” Secretary Kerry – June 26, 2013



Now that the Supreme Court has found key aspects of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional, the President has directed the Attorney General to work with other members of his Cabinet to review all relevant federal statutes to ensure this decision, including its implications for Federal benefits and obligations, is implemented swiftly and smoothly.

The Department of State is working with the Department of Justice to review all relevant federal statutes and regulations that affect visa processing and immigration benefits.

We recognize the significance of this decision for affected families, and we are working to interpret the decision and implement policy and procedural changes as soon as possible.

To view Secretary Kerry’s Statement on the Supreme Court Ruling on the Defense of Marriage Act, please visit <http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/06/211214.htm>

Need a criminal record check for your Czech visa or Živnostenský list?

Documentation on criminal record checks are provided by the Embassy through an affidavit signed by the U.S. citizen and notarized at the Embassy by a Consular Officer. Under certain circumstances, this sworn statement affirming that you have no criminal history is accepted by the Czech Government. Please confirm this requirement with the appropriate Czech Government office related to your needs. The fee for this notarial service is \$50.00 USD.

Appointments for routine services such as non-emergency passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, extra passport pages, and **notarial services** are available Monday through Friday between the hours of 0830 AM and 1130 AM. Appointments may be made online by visiting our reservation system at <https://evisaforms.state.gov/acs/default.asp?postcode=PRG&appcode=1>

Please visit our website for additional information: <http://prague.usembassy.gov>.



Get the free Smart Traveler App!

The State Department's *Smart Traveler* app is now available for **free**:

--In the iTunes store at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/smart-traveler/id442693988?mt=8>,

--From the Google Play Store at http://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.state.apps.smartravel&feature=search_result#?t=W10

The app was first launched in June 2011. It is the official State Department application for U.S. travelers. The app invites you to see the world with easy access to frequently updated official country information, travel alerts, travel warnings, maps, U.S. embassy locations, and more.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ “Know Before You Go” allows you to get travel warnings on that specific country or region, a map, safety & security information, and more.
- ◆ The "U.S. Relations Fact Sheet" gives you information on U.S. relations with that country.
- ◆ "U.S. Embassies/Consulates" is your one-stop shop for a complete list of all U.S. embassies & consulates overseas.
- ◆ Select “Smart Traveler Enrollment” from the bottom of the e-itineraries screen to enroll in this free program so that the State Department can better assist you in an emergency.

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U.S. Embassy Prague



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<http://www.flickr.com/photos/usembassyprague>

<http://www.youtube.com/USEmbassyPrague>

<http://twitter.com/USEmbassyPrague>

Traveling With Children (continued from page 1)



Due to the increasing incidents of child abductions in disputed custody cases, U.S. Customs and Border Protection recommends that unless the child is accompanied by both parents, the adult have a note from the child's absent parent (or, in the case of a child traveling with grandparents, uncles or aunts, sisters or brothers, or friends, a note signed by both parents) stating "I acknowledge that my wife/husband/etc. is traveling out of the country with my son/daughter. He/She/They has/have my permission to do so."

U.S. Customs and Border Protection also suggests that this letter be notarized.

While the Customs and Border Protection Officer may not ask to see this documentation when the child enters the U.S., if they do request such evidence, and you do not have it, you may be detained until the circumstances of the child traveling without both parents can be fully assessed.

What should a parental consent/permission letter look like? Is there a Customs and Border Protection form?

There is not a Customs and Border Protection Form letter, however, the parental consent letter should include: **Who, What, Where, When, Why**, and **contact information** for the absent parent(s).

Having the letter notarized is not necessary but highly recommended. For frequent border crossers, the letter should not exceed one year. It is recommended to have the letter in English.

If there is no second parent with legal claims to the child (deceased, sole custody, etc.) any other relevant paperwork, such as a court decision, birth certificate naming only one parent, death certificate, etc., would be useful.

Adults traveling with children should also be aware that, while the U.S. does not require this documentation, many other countries do; failure to produce notarized permission letters and/or birth certificates could result in travelers being refused entry in some countries.

Contact American Citizen Services

ACSPRG@state.gov

Open 8:30AM -12:00 PM Monday through Friday

By appointment only (except for emergencies)

<http://prague.usembassy.gov>

420-257-022-000